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NEWSPAPER

FEBRUARY 3, 1992

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late news

Ford sells computer unit

DEARBORN, Mich. — Ford Motor Co. last Friday finalized the sale of its dealer computer services department to Houston-based Universal Computer Systems Inc. The price was not disclosed.

The 230 Ford employees will become employees of a new Universal Computer Systems subsidiary named Ford Dealer Computer Services.

The computer company provides systems to the majority of Ford and Lincoln-Mercury dealers.

— *Kathy Jackson*

Fight disrupts GM union vote

Union members are squabbling at two General Motors plants in Oshawa, Ontario, that have been marked for possible closing under the automaker's downsizing plan.

A vote for plant chairperson at Canadian Auto Workers Local 222 had pitted hard-liner incumbent Tom Hoar against challenger John Caines. Caines, who favors a more flexible approach to management, was ahead by 27 votes (4,660-4,633) with 200 ballots yet to be tallied Jan. 25 when the counting erupted into a fracas. Police were called and the ballot boxes were sealed. Caines now wants an independent auditor to conduct the final count.

The quality of a plant's

see LATE NEWS, 2

Parts markup is hot issue

GM may up warranty pay before NADA convention

KATHY JACKSON
Staff Reporter

An anxiously awaited announcement from General Motors could set the industry standard for the way Big 3 dealers are paid for parts used in their warranty work.

Frank Anderson Jr., president of the National Automobile Dealers Association, confirms that GM is studying ways to increase the markup the company pays to dealers for warranty parts work and that GM may make the decision before the NADA convention, which begins Saturday in Dallas.

GM spokeswoman Kathy Bommarito said she could not comment on any plans GM may have to change its warranty reimbursement programs.

But a GM executive, who did not want to be identified, said GM plans to increase the markup from 30 percent to 40 percent this year and add 5 percentage points in 1993 and 1994 to bring the rate up to 50 percent.

"We've got to do it," the GM executive said. "The Japanese manufacturers are putting the pressure on us to do it" because they pay at retail.

GM, Ford Motor Co. and Chrysler Corp. currently pay their dealers cost plus 30 percent for warranty parts. Dealers want the retail rate, which averages about 54 percent.

Anderson said dealers are losing an average of $63,000 per year in parts sales because of the lower markup.

"We don't believe dealers should subsidize the manufacturer's warranty," Anderson said, "but we are doing that."

Ford says it has no plans to change.

see PARTS, 35

NADA CONVENTION NEWS
Chevy sees no need for make meeting ➤ 4
Kia, Amati looking for dealers ➤ 35

Windy City unveilings

Mazda's redesigned 626 will make its U.S. debut this week at the Chicago Automobile Trade Association's 84th annual auto show. World debuts are planned for the 1993 Ford Escort, 1993 Mercury Tracer, 1992 Toyota Camry wagon and 1992 Subaru Legacy Touring Sports LE wagon. See story on Page 6.

BMW scouts S. Carolina for possible plant sites

JIM HENRY and DIANA KURYLKO
Staff Reporters

BMW AG sent Anderson County, S.C., into orbit last week by conducting a feasibility study for a possible North American assembly plant there.

BMW downplayed the excitement in South Carolina, asserting that the company routinely visits communities all over the world in case BMW ever decides to produce outside Germany.

But BMW Chairman Eberhard von Kuenheim has complained about the high cost of manufacturing in Germany.

"This is routine work that we do year after year after year," said Karl Gerlinger, president and chief executive officer of BMW of North America.

"We go to a community and we look at the universities, and the

see BMW, 37

Japan dealers rap Chrysler on Jeep price

and costs penalize Chrysler for late start

ARY ANN MASKERY
ff Reporter

TOKYO — When hrysler Corp. Chairman ee Iacocca complains bout the price of a Jeep herokee in Japan, he is ot alone. The Japanese ealers who have to sell em say the same thing, nd they tend to blame hrysler.

Iacocca says the Chero-ee sells for $12,000 more Japan than in the United States, and he ttributes the difference to a "maze of red ape" and difficulty in getting certification approval.

A fully loaded Jeep Cherokee Limited costs at least $12,000 more in Japan.

The markup for Cherokee is higher than for most other imported vehicles.

Japanese sources say the fault lies as much, or more, with Chrysler's late and therefore costly attempt to set up a dealer network in Japan.

A fully loaded Cherokee Limited version carries a list price of $25,484 (plus $485 destination charge) in the U.S. market. In Japan, it is priced at 5.2 million yen, approximately $40,000.

Chrysler officials offer no explanation of the difference, and Chrysler Japan Sales Ltd., a local distribution channel that handled most of the 1,491 Chrysler sales last year, said information on homologation, certification and transportation costs was "a confidential matter."

Masatsugu Hara, assistant manager for

see JEEP PRICE, 36

Porsche slams plans into reverse, will build 'affordable' car

DIANA KURYLKO and JIM HENRY
Staff Reporters

Porsche AG's decision to build a more affordable sports car will draw the legendary German marque back toward the heart of the U.S. sports car market.

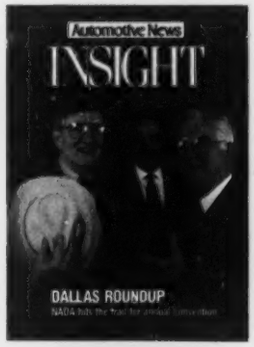
The specialty maker announced Jan. 24 that it will build a roadster to be priced well-below its current models. At the same time, Porsche put plans for a top-of-the-line 989 four-seater on ice indefinitely.

The move reverses a strategy that had seen Porsche attempt to compete above the fray with expensive, ultra-exclusive vehicles. But Chairman Arno Bohn acknowledged in a telephone interview Jan. 31 that market had become too limited. Now Porsche will attempt to build volume and revenue by targeting the competition more directly.

"We are close to competing with everyone with this vehicle," he said. Porsche will cap annual production at 30,000 units worldwide in order to preserve exclusivity, Bohn said.

The decision comes amid plunging worldwide sales

see PORSCHE, 35



Jump start on convention

A preview of the 75th National Automobile Dealers Association Convention and Exhibition in Dallas and the nominees for the 1992 Time Magazine Quality Dealer of the Year award are featured in *Automotive News Insight*, which follows Page 20.

Automotive News

'BUY AMERICAN' BACKLASH
Patriotic crossfire hits some import dealers. PAGE 4

REALISTIC REQUIREMENTS
Kia vetoes need for stand-alone stores for launch. PAGE 4

GM DEALERS SIGN UP
Salesperson retention program attracts about 20%. PAGE 6

PROTECTION PLAN PRAISED
Dealers like VW's plan for laid-off workers. PAGE 6

DAUGHTER OF DAYTONA
Ferrari's 512GT America coupe borrows styling cues. PAGE 8

OHIO MAY GET NEW CIVIC
A two-door notchback may get the nod for '93. PAGE 8

GLOBAL SALES ROUNDUP

Australia in decline PAGE 20
Brazil rebounds PAGE 20
China/Taiwan gain PAGE 18
Europe's boom fades PAGE 18
Japan off 3.8% PAGE 18
Korea surges PAGE 20

NO BASHING FOR CANADA
Dealers want to avoid anti-Japanese sentiment. PAGE 21

WANTED: DEALERS
Amati, Kia will recruit at the NADA convention. PAGE 36

DEPARTMENTS	Page
Auction ads	24-29
Auction dates	29
Classifieds	30-34
Dealers	14
Digest	35
Incentives	37
Insight	follows Page 20
Keith Crain	12
Legal file	23
Letters	12
Opinion	12
Personnel	22
Production	38
RVs	16

FEBRUARY TABLES Page

TODAY
Production, weekly by model 38

FEBRUARY 10
Sales, January top 10
Sales, January by maker
Sales, year to date by maker
Sales, domestic car by model
Sales, light truck by model
Production, weekly/Jan. totals

FEBRUARY 17
Sales, import car by model
Sales, Canada by make
Sales, dealer by make
Sales, 10 day by make
Inventory, as of January 1
Production, weekly by model

FEBRUARY 24
Sales, truck by gvw
Production, weekly by model

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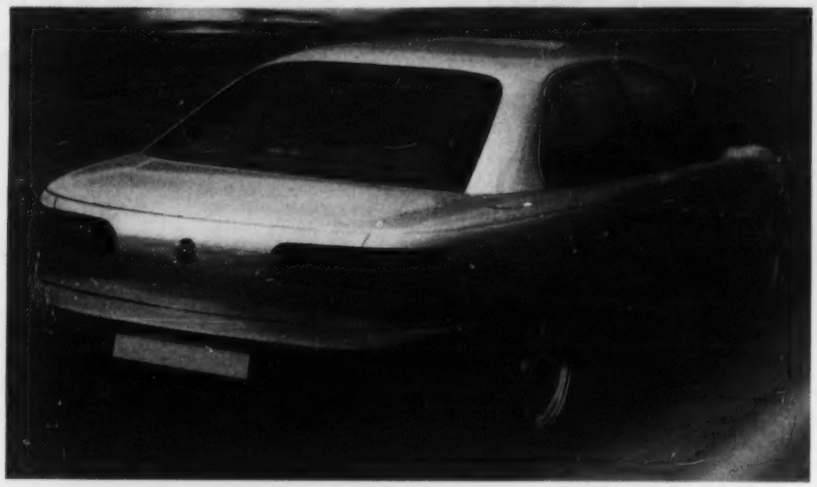

HANS G. LEHMANN/HIDDEN IMAGE

Opel remakes the Omega

Adam Opel AG will give European buyers a new Omega line this fall, replacing the current generation that bowed in 1986. This retouched spy photograph shows the expected rear design of the four-door sedan, which initially will be joined by a five-door station wagon. Coupe and van versions are expected to follow. The new Omegas retain rear-wheel drive. On the engine option list will be a new 3.0-liter V-6 sourced in Britain.

latenews

CONTINUED *from* PAGE 1

union-management relations will likely be considered by GM as it decides which factories to keep open. The Oshawa plants build Chevrolet Luminas and Buick Regals.

— *Jeremy Sinek*

J.D. Power, rival favor fast trial

LOS ANGELES — J.D. Power and Associates has asked for an expedited jury trial in its case against rival research firm AutoPacific Group.

J.D. Power alleged in a $1.25 million lawsuit last November that two former employees stole proprietary information before joining AutoPacific. The suit charges that analyst Chris Cedergren and his assistant, Steve Morrison, took documents and software from Power to help them develop a sales forecasting system at AutoPacific.

AutoPacific calls the claims a "naked assertion" and insists that the sales forecast is its own unique product. AutoPacific attorney Wayne Barsky says his client will happily agree to an expedited trial and is anxious "to expose that these claims are a fraud."

The case is before the California Superior Court in Los Angeles County.

— *Kristine Stiven Breese*

Cadillac renews Senior PGA ties

KEY BISCAYNE, Fla. — Cadillac has reached agreement with the Senior PGA Tour on a four-year extension of its sponsorship when its current contract expires this year.

The new deal is worth as much as $22 million, division officials said. Cadillac is in the final year of a three-year, $12 million to $15 million deal with the Senior PGA Tour.

Cadillac will sponsor 74 tour events during the 1993 through 1996 seasons, conducting direct marketing programs involving dealerships in each area where a Cadillac event is held. Cadillac said it sold 4,000 cars as a result of direct marketing activities during the first two years of its involvement with the senior tour.

— *Phil Frame*

Brits to open DeLorean files

LONDON — British Prime Minister John Major has agreed to release official cabinet papers from 1978 to 1982 relating to the defunct DeLorean Motor Cars Ltd. plant in Northern Ireland.

The decision clears the way for former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and 30 other British officials to give testimony for a lawsuit brought by the British government. Thatcher will be deposed either in London or New York, where the suit originated.

The evidence is being sought by Arthur Andersen & Co., which is being sued by the British government. The British government sued the accounting firm, which audited many DeLorean controlled companies, seeking $300 million on a variety of allegations, including violation of the Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act.

Thatcher is being asked about her role in matters involving the DeLorean venture, which collapsed in 1982. Britain invested £84 million in the sports car factory near Belfast, Northern Ireland.

— *Ed Wendt*

VW to dump UK distributor

LONDON — Volkswagen AG will take over distribution of its VW and Audi vehicles in Great Britain at the end of 1993.

The German manufacturer will not renew its contract with VAG United Kingdom, a subsidiary of Lonrho, an international trading group.

Neither company would comment on the matter. Like other carmakers, Volkswagen AG has been hit by the deep recession in Britain. New-car registrations dropped 23.4 percent in 1991.

— *Ed Wendt*

UAW supports Mexico strike

WASHINGTON — The UAW sent $15,000 to assist striking Mexican workers in Matamoros, Mexico, many of whom produce parts for the U.S. Big 3.

About 27,000 workers at the foreign-owned *maquiladora* plants could be affected by strikes, called to increase wages 30 percent. Many currently earn less than $1 per hour in wages and benefits.

UAW President Owen Bieber, in a letter to Agapito Gonzalez Cavazos, leader of the *maquiladora* workers, said the UAW supports the workers' struggle for higher wages and better working conditions.

Bieber has loudly opposed the proposed free trade agreement between the United States and Mexico.

3-way program urged for Brazil

SAO PAULO, Brazil — The president of Fiat's subsidiary in Brazil has proposed a three-way agreement that would cut taxes and keep wage and price increases from exceeding the inflation rate.

Pacifico Paoli made the proposal last week at a conference on the future of Brazil's auto industry. The idea is similar to a program in neighboring Argentina where the government has cut taxes, the manufacturers adjust prices only to keep pace with inflation, and the unions cannot strike for wage increases above inflation.

Dorothea Werneck, Brazil's economy secretary, said the proposal is "an alternative."

— *Rik Turner*

briefly

Cadillac plans 'land yacht'

Cadillac plans to play off its sponsorship of Dennis Connor's *Stars & Stripes* sailboat in the America's Cup race with a special edition Eldorado. Cadillac will build only 1,200 "Stars and Stripes" Eldorados, which will be available March 1 for $34,370 with monochromatic black metallic paint and emblems in the bodyside moldings. Cadillac hopes Connor's boat remains in the America's Cup chase long enough to sell the cars. Connor's boat is losing after the first round-robin in San Diego.

RED INK WRITEOFF — In December, **General Motors** said it contemplated a charge on its balance sheet to account for the closing of 21 plants over the next three years. GM wouldn't say when the charge would occur and said only that it would be less than the $3.3 billion pre-tax write-off it made in the third quarter of 1990 for other plant closings. But in a recent SEC filing for a $750 million offering of a new class of preference stock, GM says it is "more likely than not that the charge will be taken in the fourth quarter of 1991." GM also was a little more definite about the size of the charge, saying it is "expected to be less than $3 billion (pre-tax)."

RECORD WRITER — Retired Tennessee school teacher Buford Bible has bought his 35th consecutive **Chevrolet** from the same dealer. The act has earned him more than the gratitude of **General Motors.** Sen. Jim Sasser, D-Tenn., entered Bible's feat into the Congressional Record, saying, "I challenge all Americans to follow your lead." No response yet from **Ford** — nor Sasser's home-state automaker, **Nissan.**

ROOM FOR TWO — Electronic Data Systems Corp. wanted only one **EDS** in corporate America, so it sued Engineering Design & Sales of Danville, Va. That firm, which makes battery chargers and power packs, wanted to register EDS as its own trademark and a Virginia court has ruled that it can.

YOU CAN'T HAVE IT ALL — The most telling photo of the Bush-to-Japan trip showed **Chrysler** Chairman Lee Iacocca leaning back from the table, arms crossed and lips tight. Back in Detroit, he blasted the Japanese for their automotive trade surplus. But isn't Chrysler the biggest stockholder in **Mitsubishi Motor Co.?** And didn't Chrysler sell 64,447 cars imported from Japan last year? We asked a Mitsubishi public relations exec how the companies are getting along: "Aside from Lee Iacocca, we have a very good relationship."

LAST LAUGH — It's not always easy to practice what you preach. Just ask dealer Richard "Buck" Wheat, who relays this anecdote from his Gloucester **Toyota** in Virginia: A mother checks out the MR2 that her daughter wants to buy. But the mother's real goal is to talk her daughter out of buying a foreign car. "I buy American and so should she," announces the woman before getting into her Korean-made **Pontiac** LeMans.

Pontiac LeMans owner: I buy American

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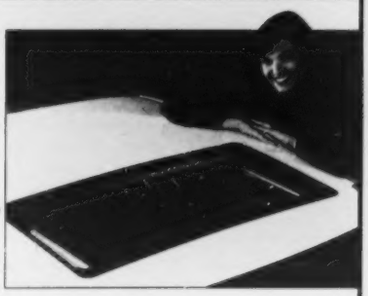

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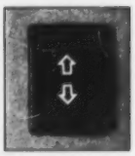

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RVs

Ford notes rise in demand for Econoline conversions

JOSEPH BOHN
Truck Editor

Demand for Ford Division's Econoline has been picking up in the van conversion and commercial fleet markets, according to Jerome Mittman, Ford Division RV sales manager.

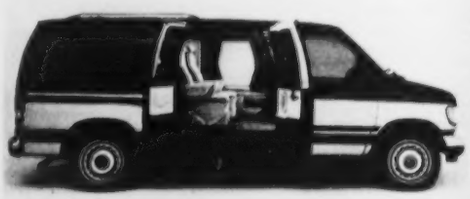
"There hasn't been a great surge of new orders, but the trend indicates that we hit bottom at the end of the year, and things are starting to improve," Mittman said. Ford, in fact, is buoyed enough by the outlook to cancel some downtime on Econoline production it had planned for March, Mittman said.

The company has been stimulating Econoline van conversion sales with a $1,000 consumer rebate and a free floorplanning offer for dealers. Dealers have until March 3 to stock, order or have reassigned to them from a consignment pool company Econoline conversions, which qualify for 150 days' free floorplanning. That includes the standard 60 days, plus an additional 90 days provided by the program.

The floorplan assistance program covers both the E-150 chassis used by converters and the E-350 cutaways used to produce commercial vehicles. The $1,000 rebate, covering 1990, 1991 and 1992 Econoline conversions, ends Feb. 4.

Ford is continuing to tighten requirements for non-pool converters. Currently, its RV prep packages on the E-150 and Aerostar van chassis are available only to pool accounts or non-pool converters with approved drop-ship arrangements. As the year goes on, non-pool converters will have to meet the same quality or customer satisfaction requirements as pool accounts.

Small firms may be exempt from some of the financial requirements that pool companies have to meet.



Glaval's Universal, based on the 1992 Ford Econoline

Even so, the list of non-pool converters is expected to shrink dramatically. Ford has about 70 non-pool converters that have received drop shipments of 1992 vans. More than half of those companies had converted fewer than five units as of early January. Mittman envisions only 20 to 25 non-pool converters by the 1993 model year, excluding those that do conversions for the handicapped. Ford will continue with a less restrictive policy for that type of converter.

But Mittman expects that most of the other non-pool converters will either join the list or, if they're too small, will be cut off. Converters that do less than 25 units a year, for example, may no longer get drop-ship units.

Most of the other non-pool companies are on Ford's pool applicant list and have a good chance of being added anyway, he said.

About 20 to 30 converters work on vans for the handicapped. Mittman said Ford has developed a way of supplying vehicles to them without imposing the same restrictions as on other non-pool van converters.

in brief

RECREATIONAL VEHICLES

Ford's Roberts to address RVIA

RESTON, Va. — Ross Roberts, Ford Division general manager, will be the keynote speaker at the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association's annual meeting in Orlando, Fla., scheduled Feb. 26-March 1.

Frank Bracken, deputy secretary of interior, will address RVIA at a Feb. 28 luncheon.

Conversion group sets April parley

GREENFIELD, Ind. — The National Vehicle Conversion Association will hold its annual Supplier Showcase April 8-9 in South Bend, Ind.

The event is designed to bring van converters and their suppliers together to explore business opportunities.

The program also will include seminars on safety topics.

Choo Choo Group is back in business

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. — Choo Choo Customs Group Inc. emerged from Chapter 7 and resumed business in early January.

The Chevrolet and GMC Truck converter is producing on several lines.

John Rogers, company president, expects to be at 100 percent production by spring.

The Faires Group, an investment firm in Knoxville, Tenn., has supplied capital to fund growth plans.

RECREATIONAL VEHICLE WHOLESALE DELIVERIES

	Nov. 1991	Nov. 1990	% change	11 mos. 1991	11 mos. 1990	% change
Travel trailers	2,400	2,000	+ 20.0	46,800	50,100	– 6.6
Park Trailers	600	500	+ 20.0	6,300	6,600	– 4.5
Travel trailers—fifth wheel	1,900	1,600	+ 18.8	26,600	26,700	– 0.4
Folding camping trailers	2,700	1,700	+ 18.8	30,400	28,400	+ 7.0
Truck campers	400	400	0.0	9,100	9,300	– 2.2
Towable RV total	**8,000**	**6,200**	**+ 29.0**	**119,200**	**121,100**	**– 1.6**
Conventional (type A)	1,700	1,500	+ 13.3	22,100	27,700	– 20.2
Van Campers (type B)	200	400	– 50.0	3,300	5,500	– 40.0
Chopped vans (all)	1,000	800	+ 25.0	14,500	16,700	– 13.2
Motor home total	**2,900**	**2,700**	**+ 7.4**	**39,900**	**49,900**	**– 20.0**
Van conversions	11,300	9,300	+ 21.5	119,600	167,300	– 28.5
TOTAL ALL RVs	**22,200**	**18,200**	**+ 22.0**	**278,700**	**338,300**	**– 17.6**

Source: Recreation Vehicle Industry Association

Compliance Group signs Canadian firm

JOSEPH BOHN
Truck Editor

The Compliance Group has signed Vantage Vans Inc. of Edmonton, Alberta, and several other Canadian converters as customers for the certified seating and hardware systems it sells.

Canadian firms typically do both Class B van campers and regular van conversions.

There are about 14 converters in Canada, most of them fairly small by U.S. standards.

Vantage Vans Inc. of Edmonton, Alberta, one of the larger ones, converts about 500 to 600 vans a year, according to Allen Swenson, president of the Compliance Group in Milwaukee.

In last year's down market, Canada only produced about 5,000 to 7,000 van conversions, compared with an estimated 130,000 units converted in the United States.

Swenson said he was very impressed by the Canadian government's expertise in testing van conversions for compliance to that country's safety standards.

Canada has requirements similar to U.S. Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 208, which governs occupant protection during crashes.

In the United States, the Compliance Group's business has increased sharply over the past few weeks, as market conditions pick up.

Swenson said his company has expanded its product line to service the various wheelbase lengths that are offered on full-sized and compact General Motors vans, Ford Econolines and Dodge Caravan C/Vs.

The company also expanded its staff of sales and service representatives, its warehousing facilities in Milwaukee and Elkhart, Wis., and is adding a third facility in Dallas.

Japanese makers foresee sales gains in 1992

MARY ANN MASKERY
Staff Reporter

TOKYO — Despite a downturn in 1991, the first in 10 years, Japanese manufacturers are forecasting sales gains for their own companies this year.

Projections for 1992 include the Honda Motor Co. projection of relatively modest growth by — 0.2 percent — a figure in line with anticipated results for the market as a whole.

At the other extreme is Mazda, which expects an 11.5 percent increase in its sales.

Manufacturers expect easier credit and new products to spur sales this year.

Excluding minicars, vehicle sales fell 3.8 percent last year, to 5.74 million, weighed down by a 12.4 percent drop in the mainstream volume segment.

That segment, which is made up of cars between 660 cc and 2.0 liters in engine displacement, was weak all year.

Sales of mini-vehicles, under 660 cc, declined 1.2 percent to 1.78 million as tough new parking regulations eliminated their previous competitive edge.

The top five sellers were:

- Toyota Corolla, 275,019
- Toyota Mark II, 193,282
- Honda Civic, 171,272
- Toyota Crown, 160,536
- Toyota Camry, 152,942.

But luxury car sales surged 42 percent for the year, to 663,610, as buyers continued to favor the many new entries in that class.

Even in December, sales of the large cars were up 38.5 percent, to 69,581, even though overall sales dropped 8.5 percent, to 423,825.

Only Mitsubishi Motors Corp. and Suzuki Motor Co. reported sales gains for 1991.

Mitsubishi sales jumped 12.6 percent for the year, to 479,799. The gain in a down market pushed its market share up 1.2 points to 8.3 percent, giving the company a lock on the No. 3 sales spot behind Toyota and Nissan.

Suzuki, primarily a minicar maker, also showed an increase in its non-mini sales, reporting an 18.6 percent gain to 45,580 units.

All other makers reported losses.

Toyota Motor Corp. sales fell 5.9 percent, to 2.35 million; Nissan Motor Co. Ltd. fell 4.2 percent to 1.34 million; Honda was down 1.7 percent, to 436,326, and Mazda, which has the most optimistic forecast for 1992, was down 5.8 percent last year to 474,069.

Toyota's market share was off 1.0 points for the year, to 40.9 percent. Nissan's share remained the same at 23.4 percent, Mitsubishi rose to 8.3 percent, Mazda fell 0.2 points to 8.2 percent, Honda climbed 0.1 points to 7.5 percent.

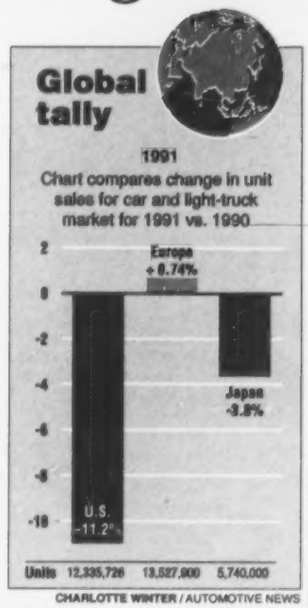
Isuzu Motors Limited was up 0.1 points to 3.3 percent, Fuji Heavy Industries, maker of Subaru, held steady at 1.4 percent, Suzuki up 0.1 points to 0.7 percent, Daihatsu Motor Co., down 0.2 points to 0.6 percent.

Imports fell 10.7 percent for the year, to 199,922 units. German marques plunged 14.4 percent, to 119,048.

General Motors sales rose 8.8 percent for the year to 9,261. Chrysler Corp. was up 4.1 percent, to 1,491, but Ford Motor Co. piunged 50.9 percent, to 2,959.

The Big 3's combined sales fell 16.5 percent to 13,711 units.

Honda was the biggest American importer. Sales of its Ohio-built Accords rose 89.8 percent in 1991, to 14,302.



German makes waning

TOKYO — German marques, resting on a mystique of engineering superiority, have dominated Japan's import segment for decades. Inevitably, their marketing performance is frequently held up to U.S. carmakers as an example of how to do business in Japan.

To some observers, however, the German nameplates have had their day in Japan.

German sales fell 14.4 percent last year, outpacing the 10.7 percent drop in the overall import segment. And they're not likely to regain their prominence, according to analyst Steven Usher of Kleinwort Benson, International.

"The prestige factor has gone the way of the 'bubble' economy," Usher says. "The nameplates have lost their luster."

At this point, he says, the Japanese domestic makers have "filled in the gaps" with their own upscale answers to the German imports.

"There is no longer any segment left uncovered," he says.

Mercedes-Benz remained the top import seller for 1991, but its sales were off 12 percent to 34,187 units. BMW sales declined 7.5 percent to 33,798, and Volkswagen, long the import leader in Japan, was off 17.9 percent to 30,195 units.

Sales for VW's Audi unit fell 13.9 percent, to 14,367 units.

— Mary Ann Maskery

China, Taiwan post double-digit gains

STEPHEN VINES
Staff Correspondent

China's National Automotive Corp. estimates that the nation's vehicle production rose 36 percent to 690,000 units last year. Sales rose 15 percent in Taiwan.

In China's state controlled society, production and sales are usually on a par. The boost followed the end of the government's austerity program and last year's upturn in the economy.

Although there is no breakdown to show how each sector of the motor vehicle industry performed, generally two-thirds of output comes from the truck sector, and tractors account for a major share.

The most reliable production figures come from the three major foreign joint venture companies that make cars. Beijing Jeep, a partnership with Chrysler Corp., registered a 15 percent rise in production to 48,200 units, 12,000 of which were Cherokee Jeeps, compared with just 7,000 made in 1990. The rest of the output consists of the aging 202N, an all-Chinese multi-purpose truck.

The Shanghai Volkswagen joint venture company, now China's largest car maker, registered a 43 percent rise in production to 35,000 units, most of them Santana sedans.

The Guangzhou Peugeot plant increased production from 5,800 in 1990 to 14,000 units last year. The plant assembles Peugeot 505 cars and pickups.

In Taiwan, passenger-car sales reached 353,846 units as the economy continued to recover from a stock market collapse a year earlier. Locally built cars gained 10 points of market share, to 76 percent, as consumer expectations of a drop in import tariffs kept them waiting. The cut, approved in December, is expected to buoy import sales this year.

Leading manufacturers, and their share, were:

- Ford Lio Ho, 30 percent
- Yue Loong (Nissan), 20 percent
- San Yang (Honda), 14 percent
- Toyota Taiwan, 10.5 percent
- Yue Tien (Peugeot, Daihatsu), 9.4 percent.

Toyota ousted General Motors as the leading importer on a volume of 19,760 units brought in from U.S. factories. Imports from Japan are barred by Taiwanese law.

GM's import volume dipped 47 percent from a year earlier, to 14,500 units, including 2,432 German-built Opels.

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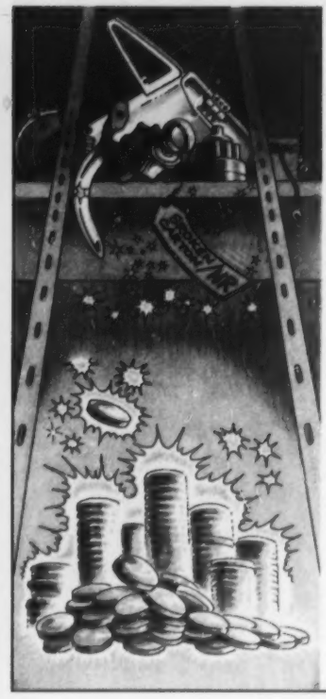

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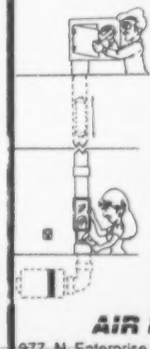

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German sales mask declines in other markets

DIANA T. KURYLKO
Staff Reporter

FRANKFURT — New-car sales in the 17-nation European automotive market rose a meager 0.74 percent last year, to a record 13.53 million, buoyed by record demand from Germany.

But that prop began to slip away after the first quarter, and analysts and industry executives say it will not be a factor again anytime soon.

"Hidden beneath a headline figure of a record 13.5 million sales last year lies the sober realization that many of Europe's car markets have gradually slipped into recession during an otherwise historic year," said Automotive Industry Data Ltd. in Great Britain.

Europe's top five selling models were:

- VW Golf/Jetta, 806,000
- Renault Clio, 628,193
- Ford Escort/Orion, 620,000
- Ford Fiesta, 615,000
- Opel/Vauxhall Kadett/Astra, 583,000.

German sales surged 28 percent in 1991 to 4.19 million units, on the strength of unexpectedly strong demand from the former East Germany.

DRI's Sanjay Dabysing expects German sales to tumble 19 percent this year, to 3.34 million, and increase gradually in 1993 as buyers return to the market to replace the vehicles purchased during the boom years.

The drag will pull European sales down 2.5 percent in 1992, Dabysing said.

Stephen Reitman, who follows the industry for UBS Philips & Drew in London, expects European sales to fall to 12.7 million this year as the German boom ends.

Europe's other major markets were either flat or hit hard.

Recession-stricken Great Britain was down 21 percent; France slipped 12 percent, and Spain was off 10.2 percent. But Italy, the Continent's second biggest market after Germany, recovered in the last quarter to end the year only 0.34 percent lower than 1990.

"The United Kingdom has remained very weak," said Arthur Maher of DRI/Europe in London. "But the market has bottomed out, and the industry is in a situation of debating about the upturn in 1992."

Volkswagen Group, with sales of 2.16 million cars and a 16 percent market share, was Europe's dominant seller again last year, widening the gap over Italy's Fiat Auto, which finished with a 12.8 percent share.

But VW's dominance rested largely on its position in the hot German market. More than half of VW's sales were in Germany, where it had a 28 percent increase over 1990 and a 27 percent share.

Demand from Germany accounted for many other makers' strong performances.

Fiat was again the second largest seller, despite an eroding market share in Italy. Fiat sold 1.73 million cars, down 6.1 percent from a year earlier.

France's Peugeot SA,, which includes Peugeot and Citroen, weathered the French recession and hung on to third place in Europe with sales of 1.61 million cars and a share of 11.9 percent.

General Motors Europe and Ford of Europe swapped fourth and fifth places last year. Ford's sales of 1.61 million (2,800 less than Peugeot SA) secured an 11.9 percent share and the No. 4 spot, while GM's sales of 1.59 million and share of 11.8 percent bumped it to fifth.

But GM is expected to be more profitable than Ford and could report the highest earnings of the six biggest European makers.

John Lawson, an analyst with Nomura Research Institute in London, said he expects that Ford will be Europe's only big-volume manufacturer to lose money in 1992. He said Ford could lose $500 to $1 billion.

Analysts said GM could well beat Ford in volume this year as capacity builds for the new Astra, which was introduced last October.

Ford has no significant new product this year.

Nissan Motor Co., the only Japanese manufacturer building cars in Europe, crept past BMW and moved closer to Mercedes-Benz last year in a possible hint of what is to come in Europe as more transplants open and quotas are phased out.

Nissan's 11 percent sales increase, fed by 124,000 cars made in England, helped boost Japanese sales to a record 1.67 million — up 5.3 percent — and a 12.3 percent share of the European market in 1991. In 1990, Japanese sales totaled 1.58 million, an 11.8 percent share.

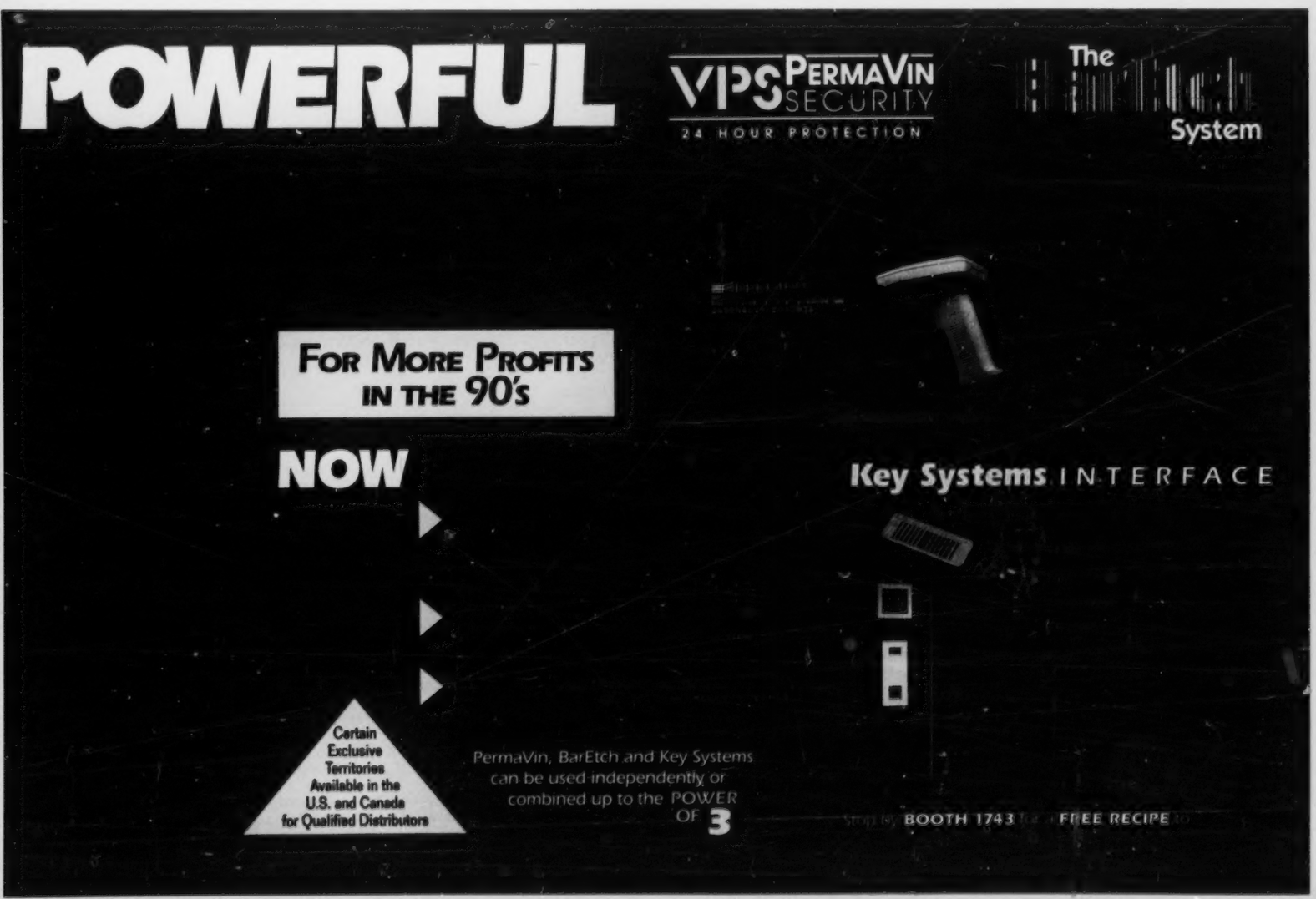
NEW-CAR SALES BY COUNTRY IN EUROPE

Country	12 months, 1991	Pct. change vs. 1990
Germany	4,187,200	+28.00
Italy	2,340,300	– 0.34
France	2,034,500	–12.00
United Kingdom	1,591,800	–21.00
Spain	882,100	–10.20
Belgium-Luxembourg	506,300	– 1.16
Netherlands	503,500	+ 0.10
Switzerland	312,200	– 4.18
Austria	302,600	+ 4.84
Portugal	226,300	+ 7.39
Sweden	187,800	–18.34
Greece	154,000	+33.56
Finland	92,900	–33.58
Denmark	83,900	+ 3.97
Ireland	67,100	–17.96
Norway	53,400	–13.72
Total	**13,527,900**	**+ 0.73**

EUROPEAN SALES BY MANUFACTURER

Manufacturer	12 months, 1991	1991 share[1]	12 months, 1990	Volume change (%) '91 vs. '90
Volkswagen	2,165,900	16.00	2,091,300	+ 3.57
Fiat Auto[2]	1,734,700	12.80	1,846,700	– 6.06
Peugeot S.A.[3]	1,613,600	11.90	1,718,000	– 6.07
Ford[4]	1,610,800	11.90	1,539,700	+ 4.62
(Jaguar	12,100	0.09	18,300	–33.88)
General Motors[5]	1,592,200	11.80	1,571,200	+ 1.34
Renault	1,347,500	10.00	1,317,800	+ 2.25
Mercedes-Benz	458,100	3.40	432,000	+ 6.04
Nissan	439,300	3.20	396,000	+10.93
BMW	413,000	3.10	363,800	+13.52
Toyota	361,000	2.70	363,200	– 0.61
Rover	348,300	2.60	388,800	–10.42
Mazda	287,500	2.10	280,400	+ 2.53
Volvo	197,000	1.50	233,900	–15.78
Mitsubishi	191,200	1.40	180,700	+ 5.81
Honda	170,700	1.30	163,400	+ 4.47
Lada	108,100	0.80	108,100	– 0.00
Suzuki	102,900	0.80	99,600	+ 3.31
Daihatsu	53,200	0.40	42,300	+25.77
Subaru	54,100	0.40	52,600	+ 2.85
Skoda	48,000	0.40	29,200	+64.38
Saab	42,900	0.40	56,900	–24.60
Others	187,900	1.30	153,300	+22.57
Total	**13,527,900**	**100.00**	**13,428,900**	**+ 0.74**

1-Does not add to 100% because of rounding
2-Includes Alfa Romeo, Lancia
3-Includes Peugeot, Citroen
4-Includes Jaguar
5-Includes Opel, Vauxhall, GM-U.S., Isuzu; excludes Saab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JEEP PRICE

Japanese dealers blame Chrysler

continued from PAGE 1

business planning at Chrysler Japan Sales, said it would be "impossible" to indicate any pricing breakdown.

The price increase for the Cherokee is two to four times as much as the increases that other importers acknowledge.

FORDS 20 PERCENT HIGHER

Prices on Ford models fall "in a range about 20 percent higher" in Japan, according to a company spokesman, including costs for freight, insurance, customs clearance, certification and distribution and marketing.

A fully equipped 3.0-liter Taurus wagon, including air bags and ABS, has a list price of 3.5 million yen ($27,000). With ABS, dual air bags and destination charge, the Taurus LX wagon base price is $20,442 in the United States.

Ford says its retail prices in Japan "are becoming more and more competitive." Ford, which sold 2,959 units last year, markets its vehicles through Autorama, a channel jointly owned by Ford and Mazda Motor Corp.

The price of a Pontiac Grand Am in Japan is 2.75 million yen (about $22,350 at current rates) compared with $17,500 for a fully loaded model in the United States, according to James Steinhagen, vice president of General Motors Japan Ltd. The difference "is not significant," Steinhagen says. "We price to market."

General Motors vehicles are handled by Yanase & Co., the largest importer in Japan, which sold 9,261 GM units last year, an increase of 8.8 percent in a segment that declined 10.7 percent in 1991. GM is hoping this year to reach 12,000.

BMW, which has invested heavily in an independent distribution system in the Japanese market, and Mercedes-Benz, which is trying to do the same, acknowledge a 10 to 15 percent difference in prices over those in Germany.

HONDA CITES COSTS

The difference for Chrysler, according to industry sources, is that it was late in developing a network, finally tying up with a small Japanese importer three years ago to form Chrysler Japan Sales at a time when land prices had risen astronomically. Industry analysts say the high price on the Cherokee may be a result of Chrysler trying to recoup heavy distribution costs on a very small volume, 1,491 units, through pricing.

Honda Motor Co. also sells Jeeps through its 100 Primo channel outlets, but it "has no control on the import prices," according to a Honda spokesman. Pricing, he said, is done through Chrysler. But that is a problem for the Honda dealers, who complain that the price is "at least 1 million yen ($7,800) too high" to compete with Japanese products. Honda plans to expand Jeep sales to 200 more dealers in the Clio and Verno sales channels.

Compared with the Cherokee's 5.2 million yen tag, a top-line Nissan Pathfinder (Terano in Japan) sells for 2.526 million yen ($19,800) and a comparable fully equipped version sells for $22,925 (plus $300 destination charges) in the United States. A Toyota Land Cruiser sells for 3.7 million yen ($29,100). It is $25,628 (plus about $295 destination charges) in the United States.

Honda dealers sold 437 Jeeps last year during the first year of a tie-up with Chrysler. During President Bush's visit to Japan, Honda pledged to triple that total to 1,200 by 1994. But Honda Managing Director Takashi Matsuda said the target may be difficult to meet without a reduction in price. Honda indicated it will discuss the pricing structure with Chrysler in the future.

JEEP RECALLS A CONCERN

In addition to the pricing difference, Honda dealers are concerned about quality, namely two recalls last year for brake problems.

Yoshioki Shimizu, manager for Honda Primo Jonan, has sold three Jeep Cherokees. He could sell more, he says, "if the vehicle is improved in terms of price and quality."

Customers complain about problems with the electrical system, the paint job and poor fuel efficiency, Shimizu says, and now his salesman "are rather reluctant to actively sell Jeeps."

Honda President Nobuhiko Kawamoto, when told of Iacocca's statement that the company's quality was good enough to sell worldwide, said "that is probably true. But the message has not gotten through to the consumers."

Kawamoto said Honda would try to help in that respect, but company officials say it will require cooperation from Chrysler. Honda says it has now assigned an engineer to Chrysler Japan on a full-time basis to deal with quality concerns from customers. Honda says it "has no control on quality, but can contribute in regard to service and distribution."

There are definite costs built into the process of modifying and certifying a vehicle for sale in Japan, and U.S. negotiators tried to cut through some of that during the president's visit. But the total extras do not account for a huge markup.

Homologation procedures, in general terms, cost 300,000 yen to 400,000 yen ($2,350 to $3,130), according to representatives of several importers. The estimate includes 50,000 yen to 150,000 yen in costs to make cars ready for Japan's roads — that no one disputes. For instance, headlights must be refocused because cars drive on the left, as in England.

14 SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

U.S. negotiators are trying to change Japan's requirements for 14 specific homologation items that cost importers about 100,000 yen. These include such items as side mirrors that snap off easily when coming in contact with a pedestrian. The items have been under discussion between U.S. and Japanese negotiators for 10 years. Officials say "some progress" was made to minimize the changes required during the president's visit.

The Automotive Type Approval Handbook for Certification also lists red tape, tax and paperwork fees that add up to 110,000 yen. That includes 30,000 yen for documents, 10,000 yen for inspection, 12,000 yen for tax, 10,000 yen for gas charges and transportation in moving vehicles through the inspection process, and 48,000 yen for labor. No one suggests that these fees will ever disappear.

Also, there is a 37,000 yen cost for passing emission tests. That point, in particular, irks American negotiators, who argue that California emission standards "are the strictest in the world" and should be accepted in Japan, yet the Japanese government insists vehicles should be retested on a different test mode.

The U.S. test mode adjusts engines for greatest efficiency at high speeds. The Japanese test mode emphasizes lower speeds, which the government says are more common in Japan.

The cost for testing is 277,070 yen for inspection on the first car, 10,300 yen for the second through 10th vehicle, which averages 37,000 yen over 10 units.

A CASE OF DOUBLESPEAK

The issue was debated again during President Bush's visit, with press reports saying the American side was asking the Japanese to change their standards and accept American standards.

Any mention of changing Japan's "standards" is doublespeak to the Japanese people, many of whom believe that their standards on any product are the highest. Even representatives of a Japanese automaker and a Japanese importer, reflecting the popular impression, responded automatically recently when asked about emission standards, stating flatly that Japanese standards were higher than American.

However, California's emission regulations, and in most cases federal regulations as well, are stricter than Japan's in every category.

An American official, familiar with the on-going debate, calls the issue "controversial." The American position is that a vehicle that meets California requirements, using a high-speed test mode, will generally meet Japanese standards, a point confirmed privately by some Japanese engineers.

So far, both sides are moving toward a compromise that will have the EPA learning how to administer the low-speed test mode, so the testing could at least be done in the United States for less cost.

When that move is accomplished, Iacocca will see some reduction in his $12,000 differential — but not much. AN

COSTS OF HOMOLOGATION

Figures are estimated averages of costs to prepare a U.S. car for sale in Japan before distribution costs. U.S. negotiators are challenging some costs.

Accepted:
Some mechanical changes $400-1,200
Red tape and taxes $900
Challenged:
Emissions testing $300
14 mechanical changes $800
Total: $2,400-3,200
Source: Automotive News

Industry needs to fix its image, Steed says

DETROIT — A presidential commission on the auto industry could change the industry's image, according to Diane Steed, president of the Coalition for Vehicle Choice.

In a speech to The Economic Club of Detroit, Steed outlined a six-point program for re-establishing the Big 3's credibility, including the formation of a presidential commission to review "the web of uncoordinated federal regulations from multiple agencies." This, together with the "cost of capital and health care for workers make it difficult for U.S. automakers to compete against foreign companies."

Steed acknowledged the perceived image of the Big 3 of whining and opposing everything — air bags, fuel efficiency and clean air — saying there "is a serious gap between perception and reality concerning the U.S. auto industry."

The Coalition for Vehicle Choice is funded mainly by General Motors, Ford Motor Co. and Chrysler Corp. — *Liz Pinto*

KUME

Nissan chairman speaks his mind

continued from PAGE 3

from each industry, and Shoichiro Toyoda, president of giant Toyota Motor Corp., is already on the board. Toyoda is known for extreme reticence.

Stating frank opinion is a position Kume has advocated not only for himself, but for his employees as well.

When he took over the president's job in 1985, Kume revolutionized Nissan's corporate structure and tore down divisions between management and staff. Once or twice a week, Kume keeps in touch with younger employees by dropping into a local club they frequent.

A former board member describes the "total silence" during meetings of the board of directors prior to Kume, because even directors were reluctant to speak. And a young staffer notes, "I feel free now to express my own opinion."

In some ways, encouraging ideas from below has dampened talk at the top. Kume notes that when he is presented with a final design for a new car, "I refrain from insisting on my own opinion." In fact, he is known for being almost silent unless he feels he has personal experience to contribute.

TRAILBLAZER REPUTATION

Kume has been a trailblazer within his industry as well as his company. He overturned traditional decorum by publicly declaring a market share goal of 30 percent (he now has 23.4 percent), and he specifically targets Nissan models against Toyota competition.

"He is very aggressive," says Nobuyoshi Yoshida, president of the Automotive Business Practice Institute. "His slogan is to fight against Toyota."

The reticent Shoichiro Toyoda "was brought up to be a leader of Toyota," Yoshida says, and that training — presumably more elitist — meant "not saying ill of others."

Kume, on the other hand, began on the production line at Nissan, even though he had graduated from the engineering division of Tokyo University, the top-ranked university in Japan.

Because of his upbringing, Yoshida says, "Kume reveals what he thinks. He never hides. He climbed the ladder to the top without any background."

Colleagues of Kume say he gained their support as he made his way to the top. Yoshida says of Kume, "He is a man of dignified presence."

ROCKY ROAD LIES AHEAD

Kume will be called upon to use his leadership skills at JAMA this year to guide the industry through politically troubled waters as the United States, Japan and Europe engage in intense trade disputes.

The industry is under government pressure to reduce work hours and extend product cycles, not only to ease pressures on labor and natural resources, but also as a means to ease trade friction. As Japan's automotive leader, with 40.9 percent of market, Toyota gets most of the pressure.

If Toyota were to lead, others would follow. But such leadership would restrict its own business, and Toyota has expressed no inclination to do so. That leaves Kume with a difficult challenge.

Both the Japan Auto Workers Union and government agencies have been pressuring the industry to reduce hours more than they have in the past year.

Kume says he is "all for a reduction in hours," but he adds, "It should not be done only on a domestic basis, but on a global perspective." And he stresses that one company cannot make such a move alone without losing out to its rivals.

Extending the product cycle beyond four years is another way to cut overtime, costs and pressure on competitors. During President Bush's visit, Teruhito Tokumoto, president of the Auto Workers Union, issued a statement calling on the Japanese auto industry "to abandon the share-comes-first philosophy."

Again, eyes turn first to Toyota, where Shoichiro Toyoda says a product cycle "cannot be decided by one company alone. We will do what customers want."

Kume, despite his vocal pro-Japanese stance, says his industry should limit its overseas presence.

"We have been turning out products to cater to demand," Kume says, "and that is an appropriate matter for the domestic market, but overseas, it is not right to keep exporting to meet demand. An over-presence overseas is not good."

Kume will be busy trying to resolve inter-company differences. He is expected to be re-elected to lead JAMA this spring, and it's unlikely he could lead JAMA, be Keidanren's vice president, and remain as president of Nissan.

Kume acknowledges thinking about stepping down, turning to reporters who raise the question and with a smile asking, "Do you know how old I am?"

But Kume shows no sign of his 70 years. An ardent amateur photographer, he is known as an unusual Japanese husband, who takes his wife, Aya, on all foreign business trips to share his experiences.

The aggressive leader of Japan's automotive industry is given to introspection in his private time. An inveterate reader of philosophy and Chinese literature, he does not let a day end without reading some passages. His office is piled high with thick files of reference material, which he uses often.

And on his office wall are the writings of a Japanese monk, reminding him: "The rise and fall of a country or company are due to one's own state of mind." AN

INCENTIVE WATCH— DEALER INCENTIVES

CONTINUING PROGRAMS

ACURA (1991 models, expires May 1)

Legend sedan	$2,500
Legend coupe	$3,000
Integra (expires Feb. 3)	$500

AUDI (1991 models, no expiration date)

Audi 100 and 200	$1,500
Audi 90	$1,000

Rebates apply to models purchased by dealer from Audi of America port stocks.

BMW (no expiration date)

750iL (1991)	$10,000

GENERAL MOTORS

Chevrolet (expires Feb. 4)	
Caprice (1992)	$250-800, quota
Camaro (1992)	$300-750, quota
Corvette ZR-1 (1992)	$2,000
Other Corvette (1992)	$1,000
Corvette ZR-1 (1991)	$3,000
Other Corvette (1991)	$2,000
Cadillac Allante (1991) (no expiration date)	$7,500 on first sale, $8,500 on additional sales
Pontiac Sunbird	$300

ISUZU (No expiration date; 1990-92 models unless otherwise noted. Rebates vary by regions.)

Impulse	$1,300-2,500
Stylus S	$600-800
Stylus S (Calif. only)*	$1,250
Stylus RS	$600-800
Stylus XS (1991, except Calif.)	$1,100
Stylus XS (Calif. only)*	$2,500
Rodeo	0-$850
Trooper (except Calif.)	$750-850
Pickup	$500-1,500
Pickup (1991 4x4, bonus in some regions)	$400

*Dealer has option of sharing rebate with buyer.

LOTUS (1991, no expiration date)

Elan	$5,000
Esprit Turbo	$11,000-15,000

MAZDA (expires Feb. 3)

Protege (1991)	$350
323 (1991)	$500
MPV (1991)	$500
MPV (1992)	$700

MITSUBISHI (1990-92 models, expires Feb. 10. This is the range of regional programs. Some rebates are based on number sold.)

Precis	0-$1,000
Mirage	0-$750
Galant	0-$2,000
Eclipse	0-$2,000
Montero	0-$1,250
Pickup	0-$2,000

NISSAN (expires Feb. 3)

Sentra (1991-92)	$300
Base model all lines (1991)	$1,700

PEUGEOT (no expiration date)

405	$5,000
505	$6,000

PORSCHE (1991 models, no expiration date. To qualify for the following rebates, dealers had to buy two cars from port stock by Jan. 17.)

911 Carrera 2, 928	$9,500
911 Carrera 4	$13,500
911 Turbo	$14,00

SUBARU (1991, expires March 3)

Legacy	$1,200-1,700

SUZUKI (expires Feb. 3)

Swift (1992)	$400-700
Swift (1991)	$700-1,000
Sidekick (1992)	$200-700
Sidekick (1991)	$700-1,000

TOYOTA (expires Feb. 3)

Corolla (1992)	$600
Pickups (1991-92)	$700-1,200

VOLKSWAGEN (no expiration date)

Passat (1991)	$1,500
Jetta, Fox, Golf (1991)	$500
All 1990 cars	$500-1,500

VOLVO (expires March 31)

1992 models	
240 series	$500-1,000
740 series	$1,000-1,500
940 series	$1,500
1991 models	
240 series	$1,500
740 series	$1,750-2,500
940 series	$1,500-2,500
780 coupe	$2,500

BMW

Executives check S. Carolina sites

continued from PAGE 1

payments and the labor.

"But I can definitely tell you we didn't buy anything (in South Carolina). I can't tell you we didn't look at anything," he said.

In Munich, BMW AG said it has been looking into possible production of engines, components and even partial car assembly in the United States because of high production costs in Germany.

South Carolina is "just one alternative, and the U.S. isn't the only place we've looked," said a BMW spokeswoman in a telephone interview.

The local newspapers in South Carolina prominently reported that BMW officials last week visited sites in western South Carolina, near Greenville, Anderson and Clemson, home of Clemson University. Local landowners reported that Anderson County officials had approached them about land prices, but the newspapers reported no sales.

Robert Bosch Corp., a German-based BMW supplier, opened an electronic component plant in Anderson in 1985. Bosch also has two joint-venture facilities in Anderson.

In a fax to its dealers about the South Carolina reports, BMW of North America Inc. acknowledged that BMW is looking at possible U.S. sites, but said the company hasn't made any commitments to build a U.S. plant.

Assembling cars outside Germany would not be new for BMW. The spokeswoman said a BMW factory in South Africa assembles cars with 60 percent South African content.

Last week, von Kuenheim said "social costs" to employers in Europe can be as high as the costs of base salary, while in Japan those social costs are 30 percent.

"New transplants in Europe can generally produce under more favorable start-up conditions," he said in Brussels, where he was speaking as head of the Association of European Automobile Manufacturers. "They typically do not have to carry the accumulated social obligations as the established manufacturers.

"This will most likely place the European manufacturers at a further competitive disadvantage," he said.

He warned that "more energetic steps to prevent further increases in the European manufacturers' cost base" must be taken.

But von Kuenheim stressed that this must not come at the cost of dramatically changing the "standards of income and social security in Europe." AN

Chrysler, Pontiac revise buyer rebates

ARLENA SAWYERS
Staff Reporter

Chrysler Corp. and Pontiac revised their consumer rebate programs last week.

Chrysler's program covers 1991 and 1992 cars and trucks and replaces most of the regional rebates announced in December. The exception is in the Northeast, where Chrysler is offering $1,500 on the Chrysler LeBaron sedan, Plymouth Acclaim and Dodge Spirit; everywhere else the rebate is $1,000 on those models.

The payments range from $500 to $1,500 on Chrysler, Dodge, Plymouth and Eagle cars and $500 to $2,000 on Dodge trucks and Jeeps.

incentive WATCH

In lieu of rebates, consumers may choose cut-rate financing that ranges from 0 percent to 9.9 percent, depending on model and contract length.

The program ends March 31.

Starting Wednesday, **Pontiac** will pay customer rebates of $500 to $750 on 1991 and 1992 vehicles, excluding LeMans. Alternative financing ranging from 2.9 to 8.9 percent is available. The incentives on 1991 models expire May 4; the program on 1992 models expires June 4.

Several incentive programs expired last weekend or will expire early this week.

Programs for **American Honda Motor Co.** and **Nissan Motor Corp. in U.S.A.** expired yesterday and today; expiring today are programs at **Toyota Motor Sales U.S.A. Inc., Mazda Motor of America Inc.** and **American Suzuki Motor Corp.**

General Motors and **Ford Motor Co.** incentives expire tomorrow, except for Cadillac and Lincoln. AN

INCENTIVE WATCH — CUSTOMER INCENTIVES

NEW PROGRAMS

CHRYSLER CORP. (Expires March 31. Finance rates in lieu of rebates from zero to 9.9 percent.)

1991-92 models

Chrysler New Yorker Fifth Ave., Imperial	$1,500
N.Y. Salon, LeBaron sedan	$1,000
LeBaron coupe, conv.	$500
Dodge Monaco	$1,500
Shadow, Spirit	$1,000
Daytona, Colt 3-dr.	$500
Dodge Ramcharger	$2,000
Ram wagon (van and conversion)	$1,000
Ram pickup (gas), Dakota pickup	$750
Ram 50 pickup	$500
Eagle Premier	$1,500
Talon	$1,000
Summit 3-dr., 4-dr., '92 wagon	$500
Jeep Cherokee	$1,500
Comanche	$750
Wrangler	$500
Plymouth Sundance, Acclaim, Laser	$1,000
Colt 3-dr., '92 Vista	$500
All minivans	$500
Northeast region only: LeBaron sedan, Acclaim, Spirit	$1,500

PONTIAC (Feb. 5 to June 4 on 1992 models; Feb. 5 to May 4 on 1991 models. Finance rates in lieu of rebates range from 2.9 to 8.9 percent.)

Sunbird, Grand Am, Firebird, Bonneville	$500
Grand Prix, Trans Sport	$750

CONTINUING PROGRAMS

FORD MOTOR CO.

1992 models

Expires Feb. 4 unless otherwise noted. In lieu of rebates, finance rates of 2.9 to 7.9 percent are offered. Finance rates differ by vehicle lines and regions. No finance rate incentives on Lincoln models.

Ford Festiva, Tempo, Taurus	$500
Escort (regional programs)	$500-750
Mustang, Thunderbird	$750
Probe, Taurus SHO, Crown Victoria	$1,000
F series, Aerostar	$500
Ranger	$750
Aerostar (Northeast), Bronco, Econoline (RV pkg.)	$1,000
Mercury Topaz, Sable	$500
Tracer (regional programs)	$500-750
Capri, Cougar	$750
Grand Marquis	$1,000
Lincoln Town Car, Mark VII, Continental (expires March 3)	$1,500

Pre-1992 models

1990-91 Ford Division models and 1991 Lincoln-Mercury models. Expires Feb. 4. In lieu of rebates, finance rates of 2.9 to 7.9 percent are offered. Finance rates differ by vehicle line and region.

Ford Tempo, Taurus	$400
Taurus SHO	$600
Escort, Mustang, Thunderbird	$750
Festiva, Probe	$1,000
Ranger, F series, Aerostar, Econoline (except E-150 RV)	$400
Aerostar (Northeast), Bronco, Econoline E-150 (RV pkg.)	$1,000
Mercury Topaz, Sable	$400
Tracer, Cougar	$750
Capri	$2,000

GENERAL MOTORS

Expires Feb. 4 unless otherwise noted. Finance rates in lieu of rebates start at 2.9 percent for Buick, Oldsmobile and Pontiac; 6.9 percent for Chevrolet and GMC.

1992 models

Buick Skylark*	$250-750*
Century, Regal*	$250-1,000*
Riviera	$2,000
Cadillac (expires March 31) DeVille, Fleetwood, Brougham	$1,500
Chevrolet Caprice	$1,000
Geo Metro and Storm	$750
Geo Prizm, Camaro, Beretta, Lumina	$500
Cavalier	$500
G van, S/T Blazer, Lumina APV	$1,000
Geo Tracker, Astro, S/T pickup	$750
C/K pickup	$500
GMC G-van, S15 Jimmy (except Typhoon)	$1,000
Sonoma (except Syclone, GT), Safari	$750
Sierra (except Crew Cab)	$500
Oldsmobile Cutlass Ciera (national)	$1,000
Regional programs, various models	$500-2,000
Pontiac Trans Sport	$1,000
Grand Prix	$750
LeMans, Firebird	$500

*Based on option package selected

1991 models

Chevrolet Caprice	$1,000
Geo Metro, Camaro	$750
Geo Storm and Prizm, Beretta, Lumina	$500
Cavalier, Corsica	$300
V Blazer, Suburban, G-van, S/T Blazer, Lumina APV	$1,000
Geo Tracker, Astro, S/T pickup, R/V and C/K pickups	$500
GMC V Jimmy, Suburban	$1,500
S15 Jimmy, G-van, Safari	$1,000
Sonoma (except Syclone)	$750
Sierra, R/V pickups	$500
Oldsmobile - regional programs, various models	$500-2,000
Pontiac Trans Sport, LeMans, Firebird	$1,000
Grand Prix	$750

MAZDA (expires Feb. 3)

Protege (1991)	$1,000
Protege (1992)	$500
Navajo (1991)	$1,000

MITSUBISHI (expires Feb. 10)

Precis/Mirage (1990-92) Southwest	$500
West	$750
Galant (1990-92) West	$750
Pickups (1991-92) Southwest	$1,000

SUBARU (expires March 3)

Loyale (1991-92, fwd sedan, awd wagon)	$500
Legacy L, L Plus (1992)	$500

CHICAGO

Ford, Toyota top the debut news

continued from PAGE 6

room traffic and more positive consumer attitudes reflected in closing rates."

If the enthusiasm dealers are seeing in their showrooms can be turned into sales, the Midwest's biggest show could provide the pivot point for the turn-around some analysts are predicting for the second and third quarters.

Although most of the concept vehicles destined for Chicago have been shown in Tokyo, Los Angeles or Detroit, this will be the first time they are positioned under one roof.

Detroit's crowd, for example, didn't see the 1993 Chrysler Concorde. That model was reserved for the Los Angeles show. Los Angeles didn't see the Chrysler New Yorker — that was saved for Detroit. Likewise, Mazda's redesigned 626 was unveiled at the Tokyo show, but the first U.S. audience will be in Chicago.

Ford Motor Co. is using the Chicago stage to relaunch its struggling Escort and Tracer lines. The redesigned models were introduced in spring 1990 as 1991 models, but sales, especially Escort sales, have failed to match the success of the previous model.

The 1993 Escort will rely on minor cosmetic changes — a restyled front-end treatment, the addition of color-keyed bumpers, and new exterior colors and interior trim.

Similar attention is given to the 1993 Mercury Tracer. Besides new colors, trim treatment and wheel cover designs, all Tracer models will carry the simulated light bar that had been reserved for the front end of the Tracer LTS.

Toyota's executives are expected to use a "built-in-America" theme for the introduction of the Camry wagon. The model will be built in the company's Georgetown, Ky., plant, where the newly redesigned Camry sedan is assembled. A Toyota insider said the wagon is likely to be exported to Asia.

The Chicago audience also will view Subaru's Legacy Touring Sports LE wagon, a new model that has a performance emphasis with handling, anti-lock brakes, all-wheel drive and turbo-engine hardware from the company's existing Legacy Sport Sedan.

Pontiac will unveil what it calls an "enhanced" production model, a concept based on the current Grand Am GT.

Several Pontiac insiders suggest that the division is offering a peek at the platform with exterior tweaks that will eventually become the new GTO, although the vehicle on display will be fitted with a Quad 4 rather than the 3400 multivalve V-6 currently offered in the Grand Prix and likely to be fitted in the GTO.

Enhancements include a citron gold paint job, graphite leather interior upgrade, widened alloy wheels, larger hand-made Goodyear tires, a European-style roof-mounted antennae and a suspension lowered by about four inches.

Bill Scott, chief designer for Pontiac's interior studio, said the decision to transform a production model into a show car just for Chicago was "sort of half marketing and half show business."

"I mean, this is no big investment and we're talking about extremely fast response time. What we have here is something that is very close to what we have on the road." AN

SCHEDULED PLANT CLOSINGS

Plant	Weeks down	Units lost/ week
CHRYSLER		
Bramalea, Ontario	†	
Newark, Del.	2/3	
Chrysler LeBaron J		1,100
Dodge Spirit		1,250
Plymouth Acclaim		1,550
FORD MOTOR CO.		
Dearborn, Mich.	2/3, 2/10	2,800
Ford Mustang		
Edison, N.J.	2/3, 2/10	2,800
Ford Ranger		
Michigan Truck	2/3	2,900
Ford Bronco		
Ford F-series pickup		
Oakville, Ontario	2/3, 2/10	4,800
Ford Tempo		
Mercury Topaz		
Wayne, Mich.	2/3, 2/10	5,800
Ford Escort		
GENERAL MOTORS		
Doraville, Ga.	2/3, 2/10, 2/17	2,400
Oldsmobile Cutlass Supreme		
Fairfax, Kan.	2/3	
Pontiac Grand Prix		3,300
Hamtramck, Mich. (V line)	2/3	
Cadillac Allante		60
Oshawa, Ontario (No. 1)	2/3	
Chevrolet Lumina		3,000
Oshawa, Ontario (No. 2)	2/3	
Chevrolet Lumina		3,000
Buick Regal		3,000
Pontiac, Mich. (West)	2/3, 2/10, 2/17	
Chevrolet S10		1,650
GMC Sonoma		375
Chevrolet Blazer		140
GMC Yukon		50
Shreveport, La.	2/3, 2/10, 2/17	
Chevrolet S10		1,650
GMC Sonoma		375
Chevrolet Blazer		140
GMC Yukon		50
Tarrytown, N.Y.	2/3, 2/10	
Chevrolet Lumina APV		1,500
Oldsmobile Silhouette		500
Pontiac Trans Sport		840
Van Nuys, Calif.	2/3	
Chevrolet Camaro		1,300
Pontiac Firebird		600
Total U.S. car		**20,160**
Total U.S. truck		**12,970**
Total Canada car		**13,800**
Total units lost week of 2/3		**46,930**

†Plant closed for retooling until spring 1992

Source: Automotive News Data Center

GM replaces Hamtramck plant boss

DETROIT — Loren "Larry" Tibbitts, who had been manager of Cadillac's Detroit-Hamtramck assembly plant since 1988, took an early retirement buyout from General Motors rather than accept reassignment.

The plant assembles the Cadillac Eldorado, Seville, Oldsmobile Toronado and Buick Riviera.

Tibbitts, 54, credited with developing the Hamtramck plant's process that was instrumental in Cadillac winning the 1990 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, was replaced by Herbert Stone, who managed the Wentzville, Mo., assembly plant for the Buick-Oldsmobile-Cadillac Group.

Cadillac said Tibbitts' retirement is effective June 1 and that he's on special assignment until then. But Tibbitts no longer is working at GM and said he is close to landing another job.

Stone reportedly is a disciple of Edward DuCharme, Cadillac's new manufacturing manager, who switched jobs with Roy Roberts, now manufacturing manager at B-O-C's Flint Automotive Division.

— Phil Frame

U.S. AND CANADA CAR AND TRUCK PRODUCTION

Vehicles are domestic unless noted. Vehicles are cars unless noted.

	Est. 1/27-2/1/92	Actual 1/28/-1/25/92	Jan. Est.	Year 1/1-2/1/92	Year 1/1-2/2/91
LeBaron J	1,250	1,206	4,057	4,057	2,522
New Yorker	600	904	2,271	2,271	1,295
Fifth Avenue	1,050	891	2,573	2,573	3,618
Imperial	75	275	588	588	1,025
Town & Country (trk.)	200	225	580	580	150
Total Chrysler	**3,175**	**3,501**	**10,069**	**10,069**	**8,610**
Sundance	1,000	1,447	2,447	2,447	1,800
Acclaim	2,875	2,191	7,168	7,168	11,025
Voyager (trk.)	1,300	1,373	3,828	3,828	7,660
Voyager (Can. trk.)	2,868	2,686	11,425	11,425	9,681
Total Plymouth	**8,043**	**7,697**	**24,868**	**24,868**	**30,166**
Daytona	625	654	1,279	1,279	1,094
Shadow	2,625	2,604	5,229	5,229	2,600
Dynasty	3,150	2,893	8,193	8,193	15,596
Spirit	1,050	1,545	5,507	5,507	10,441
Viper	0	0	0	0	0
Monaco (Can.)	0	0	0	0	0
Caravan (trk.)	1,875	2,302	5,837	5,837	9,574
Caravan (Can. trk.)	3,570	3,773	16,414	16,414	13,272
Caravan C/V (trk.)	60	48	131	131	278
Caravan C/V (Can. trk.)	162	197	689	689	391
Dakota (trk.)	3,300	3,740	8,703	8,703	3,109
Ram pickups (trk.)	1,600	1,835	4,242	4,242	3,127
Ram Wagon (Can. trk.)	550	0	1,960	1,960	550
Ram Van (Can. trk.)	1,410	0	4,558	4,558	1,150
Total Dodge	**19,977**	**19,591**	**62,742**	**62,742**	**61,182**
Premier (Can.)	0	0	0	0	0
Cherokee (trk.)	0	4,223	6,919	6,919	6,644
Comanche (trk.)	0	119	198	198	541
Grand Cherokee (trk.)	100	100	231	231	0
Wagoneer (trk.)	0	35	51	51	181
Wrangler (Can trk.)	1,304	1,827	7,391	7,391	4,007
Total Jeep-Eagle	**1,904**	**6,304**	**14,790**	**14,790**	**11,373**
Total U.S. car	**14,308**	**14,610**	**39,312**	**39,312**	**51,016**
Total Can. car	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Total U.S. truck	**8,435**	**14,000**	**30,720**	**30,720**	**31,264**
Total Can. truck	**10,364**	**8,483**	**42,437**	**42,437**	**29,051**
CHRYSLER CORP.	**33,099**	**37,093**	**112,469**	**112,469**	**111,331**
Escort	5,767	4,554	10,321	10,321	12,898
Mustang	2,817	2,203	5,020	5,020	5,538
Tempo	2,861	2,653	8,521	8,521	7,166
Tempo (Can.)	3,840	3,820	10,993	10,993	5,373
Taurus	0	6,183	24,456	24,456	24,546
Thunderbird	1,828	1,210	3,989	3,989	4,846
Crown Victoria (Can.)	2,399	0	4,430	4,430	5,111
Aerostar (trk.)	4,010	3,210	11,245	11,245	9,617
Bronco (trk.)	0	554	1,066	1,066	1,364
Explorer/Bronco II (trk.)	6,614	5,249	26,469	26,469	22,577
Navajo (trk.)	74	60	310	310	1,687
Econoline (trk.)	4,455	3,523	13,923	13,923	8,856
Heavies (trk.)	1,037	830	2,900	2,900	3,832
Light trucks (trk.)	9,357	9,340	34,536	34,536	19,869
Light trucks (Can. trk.)	3,049	3,040	15,123	15,123	7,533
Ranger (trk.)	7,269	5,788	17,081	17,081	20,957
Total Ford Div.	**55,377**	**52,217**	**190,383**	**190,383**	**161,770**
Topaz	1,539	882	3,532	3,532	2,962
Topaz (Can.)	960	941	2,826	2,826	1,638
Cougar	1,184	828	2,644	2,644	4,154
Sable	0	2,255	8,977	8,977	6,655
Grand Marquis (Can.)	2,394	0	4,476	4,476	0
Total Mercury	**6,077**	**4,906**	**22,455**	**22,455**	**15,409**
Continental	0	793	1,586	1,586	5,307
Mark VII	0	159	258	258	929
Town Car	0	2,376	4,766	4,766	12,509
Total Lincoln	**0**	**3,328**	**6,610**	**6,610**	**18,745**
Total L-M Div	**6,077**	**8,234**	**29,065**	**29,065**	**34,154**
Total U.S. car	**15,996**	**24,096**	**74,070**	**74,070**	**87,510**
Total Can. car	**9,593**	**4,761**	**22,725**	**22,725**	**12,122**
Total U.S. truck	**32,816**	**28,554**	**107,530**	**107,530**	**88,759**
Total Can. truck	**3,049**	**3,048**	**15,123**	**15,123**	**7,533**
FORD MOTOR CO.	**61,454**	**60,451**	**219,448**	**219,448**	**195,924**
Skylark	1,135	899	4,771	4,771	11,093
Century	1,449	1,303	4,310	4,310	3,216
Regal (Can.)	2,200	2,290	6,726	6,726	13,107
Riviera	242	145	929	929	778
Park Avenue/Electra	0	1,627	3,396	3,396	9,866
LeSabre	3,500	2,545	13,091	13,091	17,697
Roadmaster Sedan*	1,232	1,032	5,285	5,285	0
Roadmaster Wagon*	373	222	1,148	1,148	0
Reatta	0	0	0	0	41
Total Buick	**10,131**	**10,063**	**39,656**	**39,656**	**55,798**
Eldorado	1,121	636	3,521	3,521	963
Seville	1,146	671	3,671	3,671	1,945
Brougham	402	419	2,122	2,122	2,081
DeVille	3,379	0	3,379	3,379	13,659
Allante	0	0	0	0	282
Total Cadillac	**6,048**	**1,726**	**12,693**	**12,693**	**18,930**
Cavalier	4,425	3,439	16,179	16,179	24,234
Camaro	0	1,089	4,232	4,232	4,029
Corsica-Beretta	4,880	3,713	19,815	19,815	20,894
Lumina (Can.)	6,900	6,959	20,199	20,199	19,089
Caprice	2,308	1,533	7,859	7,859	12,899
Corvette	480	0	480	480	2,112
Astro (trk.)	3,331	2,934	14,312	14,312	5,878
Blazer (trk.)	344	338	1,315	1,315	544
Lumina APV (trk.)	1,823	1,223	3,046	3,046	3,913
Mediums (trk.)	128	125	639	639	1,000
P-Model (trk.)	493	324	1,170	1,170	631
Pickups (trk.)	6,198	2,517	9,026	9,026	18,336
Pickups (Can. trk.)	4,300	4,381	17,976	17,976	13,887
S10 (trk.)	5,973	4,083	15,849	15,849	22,877
S10 Blazer (trk.)	2,220	2,528	10,526	10,526	3,253
Sportsvan (trk.)	1,175	872	4,168	4,168	1,429
Sportsvan (Can. trk.)	1,000	1,035	4,652	4,652	1,274
Suburban (trk.)	876	824	3,568	3,568	1,936
Total Chevrolet	**46,854**	**37,917**	**155,011**	**155,011**	**158,215**
Achieva/Calais	2,820	1,797	9,968	9,968	7,855
Cutlass Ciera	3,600	2,779	9,686	9,686	3,333
Cutlass Ciera (Can.)	0	0	0	0	7,862
Cutlass Supreme	2,400	1,821	6,480	6,480	9,254
Toronado	158	103	592	592	442
Eight Eight	1,635	1,469	6,640	6,640	8,219
Custom Cruiser Wag.††	149	78	449	449	0
Ninety Eight	1,346	0	1,346	1,346	8,181
Silhouette (trk.)	550	462	1,012	1,012	1,073
Bravada (trk.)	415	353	1,557	1,557	2,121
Total Oldsmobile	**13,073**	**8,862**	**37,730**	**37,730**	**48,340**
Sunbird	2,135	1,655	7,830	7,830	10,478
Grand Am	5,025	3,834	19,862	19,862	13,396
Firebird	0	505	1,877	1,877	1,003
Grand Prix	3,362	2,707	9,265	9,265	8,882
Pontiac 6000	0	0	0	0	2,247
Bonneville	0	2,323	5,243	5,243	4,230
Trans Sport (trk.)	629	535	1,164	1,164	2,060
Total Pontiac	**11,151**	**11,559**	**45,241**	**45,241**	**42,296**
Yukon/Jimmy (trk.)	136	78	456	456	215
Mediums (trk.)	472	447	2,032	2,032	1,706
P-Model (trk.)	27	88	151	151	209
Pickups (trk.)	2,642	1,092	3,910	3,910	6,051
Pickups (Can. trk.)	1,500	1,596	6,672	6,672	5,419
Syclone/Sonoma (trk.)	1,267	797	4,004	4,004	5,384
Typhoon/S15 Jimmy (trk.)	650	714	3,064	3,064	2,137
Safari (trk.)	1,116	1,014	4,756	4,756	2,503
Suburban (trk.)	375	205	1,083	1,083	1,137
Vandura (trk.)	420	463	2,637	2,637	531
Vandura (Can. trk.)	1,100	1,144	4,370	4,370	655
Total GMC	**9,705**	**7,638**	**33,135**	**33,135**	**25,947**
Total Saturn*	**2,948**	**2,358**	**12,382**	**12,382**	**2,960**
Total U.S. car	**51,650**	**40,702**	**185,808**	**185,808**	**206,269**
Total Can. car	**9,100**	**9,249**	**26,925**	**26,925**	**40,058**
Total U.S. truck	**31,260**	**22,816**	**89,445**	**89,445**	**84,924**
Total Can. truck	**7,900**	**8,156**	**33,670**	**33,670**	**21,235**
GENERAL MOTORS	**99,910**	**80,123**	**335,848**	**335,848**	**352,486**
Can. car	2,200	2,256	10,095	10,095	11,847
Can. trk.	1,400	1,478	6,343	6,343	5,006
CAMI*	**3,600**	**3,734**	**16,438**	**16,438**	**16,853**
DIAMOND-STAR*	**3,448**	**2,644**	**13,226**	**13,226**	**14,150**
Civic	1,980	1,708	7,711	7,711	7,606
Civic (Can.)	2,410	2,444	9,832	9,832	9,799
Accord	8,320	8,186	34,067	34,067	31,572
Total U.S. car	**10,300**	**9,894**	**41,778**	**41,778**	**39,178**
Total Can. car	**2,410**	**2,444**	**9,832**	**9,832**	**9,799**
HONDA	**12,710**	**12,338**	**51,610**	**51,610**	**48,977**
HYUNDAI Sonata (Can.)	**550**	**229**	**1,555**	**1,555**	**4,010**
MAZDA*	**2,239**	**1,792**	**8,818**	**8,818**	**12,415**
U.S. trk.	1,693	1,341	6,767	6,767	6,247
Can. trk.	165	166	682	682	664
NAVISTAR	**1,858**	**1,507**	**7,449**	**7,449**	**6,911**
Sentra	3,388	2,717	13,373	13,373	14,037
Pickup (trk.)	3,290	2,665	13,044	13,044	13,445
NISSAN	**6,678**	**5,382**	**26,417**	**26,417**	**27,482**
Geo Prizm	2,000	1,633	8,434	8,434	9,462
Toyota Corolla	2,300	2,004	10,153	10,153	9,339
Toyota Hilux (trk.)	450	440	1,995	1,995	0
NUMMI	**4,750**	**4,077**	**20,582**	**20,582**	**18,801**
Legacy	1,200	1,146	5,089	5,089	5,246
Pickup (trk.)	525	482	2,185	2,185	0
Rodeo (trk.)	875	802	3,808	3,808	0
Total U.S. car	**1,200**	**1,146**	**5,089**	**5,089**	**5,246**
Total U.S. trk.	**1,400**	**1,284**	**5,993**	**5,993**	**5,087**
SUBARU-ISUZU	**2,600**	**2,430**	**11,082**	**11,082**	**10,333**
Camry	4,600	4,599	21,165	21,165	20,697
Corolla (Can.)	1,500	1,580	5,991	5,991	6,218
TOYOTA	**6,100**	**6,179**	**27,156**	**27,156**	**26,915**
VOLVO 740, 940 (Can.)	**150**	**142**	**636**	**636**	**809**
AM GENERAL (trk.)	**375**	**300**	**1,575**	**1,575**	**2,050**
MISCELLANEOUS (trk.)**	**2,400**	**1,520**	**10,080**	**10,080**	**13,600**
Total U.S. car	**111,421**	**105,837**	**421,228**	**421,228**	**469,319**
Total Canada car	**25,503**	**26,661**	**77,759**	**77,759**	**84,863**
Total U.S.-Canada Car	**136,924**	**126,498**	**498,987**	**498,987**	**554,182**
Total U.S. truck	**82,119**	**72,528**	**267,149**	**267,149**	**245,376**
Total Canada truck	**22,878**	**21,323**	**98,255**	**98,255**	**63,489**
Total U.S.-Canada truck	**104,997**	**93,843**	**365,404**	**365,404**	**308,865**
TOTAL U.S.	**193,540**	**178,357**	**688,377**	**688,377**	**714,695**
TOTAL CANADA	**48,381**	**41,984**	**176,014**	**176,014**	**148,352**
TOTAL U.S.-CANADA CAR & TRUCK	**241,921**	**220,341**	**864,391**	**864,391**	**863,047**

*Estimate †1990 totals reflect LeSabre (rwd) ††1990 totals reflect Olds. 88 (rwd)

*CAMI includes Geo Metro and Suzuki Swift cars and Geo Tracker and Suzuki Sidekick trucks; Diamond-Star includes Eagle Summit and Talon, Mitsubishi Eclipse and Mirage and Plymouth Laser; Mazda includes MX-6, 626 and Ford Probe.

**Estimates for Mack, Volvo-White, Kenworth, Peterbilt, Freightliner, Mercedes-Benz.

May contain error of one or two units due to rounding.

Saturn adds day to week

ANNE E. WRIGHT
Chief Statistician

The Saturn Corp. plant in Spring Hill, Tenn., will add a day to its four-day work week beginning Friday. The extended work week is slated to continue throughout the year.

Saturn officials anticipate that customer demand will increase this year as new dealerships open.

Unionized workers at the facility were presented several strategies to increase output, and 89 percent of them chose to add a 10-hour day, according to Saturn spokesman Bill Betts.

Since April 29, the plant's work week has comprised four 10-hour days. Production at that rate would not be adequate to meet the expected demand, according to Saturn officials.

With the additional 10 hours per week, the plant could reach annual output of 240,000. The plant currently produces 850 units per day. Production is scheduled to accelerate and is expected to reach a rate 240,000 by the end of 1992.

Year-to-date, car and truck production in the United States and Canada topped the year-ago total for the first time in nearly 12 months.

So far this year, Canadian car and truck production is ahead of 1991 by 18.6 percent.

U.S. manufacturers have assembled 688,377 vehicles this year, 3.7 percent behind 1991.

Last week's estimated car and truck production in the United States was up 8.5 percent over the prior week — the fourth consecutive weekly increase. Cars were up 5.3 percent, and trucks were up 13.2 percent.

In Canada, estimated car production last week topped the prior week by 23.4 percent and the year-ago week by 32.1 percent. Truck producers' estimated production last week rose 7.3 percent over the prior week and 27.9 percent over the year-ago week.

The daily-build rate was 48,384 units last week, up 13.7 percent over the year-ago week but down 12.2 percent from the prior week.

U.S. and Canadian makers will idle 11 car and four truck plants this week due to slow sales. One year ago, 19 car and truck assembly facilities were idle in response to the Persian Gulf war.

Seven truck plants in the United States and Canada worked overtime last week.

General Motors' Oshawa, Ontario, and Scarborough, Ontario, truck plants worked two shifts of overtime last Saturday. The postal line at the Moraine, Ohio, facility worked one shift last Saturday. And GM's Janesville, Wis., truck plant worked two shifts of overtime last Friday and one shift on Saturday.

Ford Motor Co. ran daily overtime at the Louisville, Ky., and Kansas City, Mo., truck plants last week. The Kansas City facility also worked one shift on Saturday.

Chrysler Corp.'s minivan plant in St. Louis was scheduled to work overtime last Saturday.